

7 Steps To A Healthier Classroom

Take these simple steps to a healthier classroom for you and your students.

- 1. Store stuffed toys in plastic bins when not in use.** Stuffed toys can gather dust and dust mites that can increase the risk of asthma, especially in developing children.
- 2. Eliminate excess rugs** that can collect dust and dirt and cause respiratory problems. Ask students to stomp on mats outside your room. This will help keep dirt and pesticides from entering in the first place!
- 3. Remove air fresheners, scented candles, and potpourri.** Instead of going to the source, air fresheners mask odors and lower air quality in a classroom. Try finding the source of the problem, or use fans or open windows to help air out a classroom.
- 4. Replace any personal cleaning supplies in your classroom with safer alternatives** such as baking soda and vinegar or other non-toxic cleaner. Hazardous cleaners can harm human health if they are ingested, inhaled, or absorbed through the skin and should not be brought into a classroom. Be sure to dispose of hazardous products safely.
- 5. Leave a three-foot buffer around air vents.** Adequate fresh air ventilation is necessary for a healthy classroom. Blocking air vents lessens airflow in a classroom and raises CO₂ levels—which makes students sleepy and less attentive. These vents should be cleaned and filters should be replaced regularly by the school.
- 6. Think twice about classroom pets.** Certain animals such as rabbits and small rodents are highly allergenic, as are some types of wood chip bedding. Some animals bite, peck, or scratch at people, which can increase the risk of infection or disease for students.
- 7. Contact your school maintenance staff if you suspect problems.** If you are having problems with air quality or other issues in the classroom, contact your school maintenance department to deal with air quality, pests, or other problems in the classroom. Teachers and students have a right to a healthy workplace.



Glue stick (nontoxic)

Leather or vinyl furniture that
can be easily cleaned

Expo2 markers (nontoxic)

Covered bins in which to
organize teaching materials



Rubber cement (toxic)

Upholstered furniture that
collects dust

Expo markers (toxic)

Clutter (accumulates dust
and is hard to clean)

Produced by



as part of the Local Hazardous
Waste Management Program
in King County



Printed on recycled paper –July 2006

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